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SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 6th MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Wednesday, 18 April 1990, at 10 a.m.

Chairman: Miss DIEGUEZ (Mexico)

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General debate (continued)

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Any corrections to the records of the meetings of this session will be consolidated in a single corrigendum, to be issued shortly after the end of the session.

The meeting was called to order at 10.25 a.m.

GENERAL DEBATE (continued)

1. Mr. SLABY (Observer for Czechoslovakia) said that the role of the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), one of the most important international organizations, was highly positive and irreplaceable and that its international prestige had further increased in recent times. His country was ready to play a more active role than it had done so far in UNICEF and in the humanitarian sphere of international relations, and to offer considerable human, professional, and in the future, perhaps, economic assistance to UNICEF. Czechoslovakia's great experience in the area of child welfare could be of immediate use to UNICEF activities. It was ready to continue making governmental and non-governmental contributions to UNICEF, and had not forgotten the significant food and medical aid provided to Czechoslovakia by UNICEF in the late 1940s and early 1950s. It also appreciated the steps taken by UNICEF to make effective use of the Czechoslovak contributions in a non-convertible currency. The international animated film workshop held at Prague from 26 to 31 March 1990 not only constituted proof of the expanding relations between Czechoslovakia and UNICEF, but had also been an important contribution to the implementation of the Fund's objectives. He referred to the importance of the recent visit of the Executive Director to Czechoslovakia, the first visit ever paid to his country by an Executive Director of UNICEF; it was to be hoped that the mutual co-operation between Czechoslovakia and UNICEF, which was currently at its highest point, would lead to other such visits.

2. The adoption of the Convention on the Rights of the Child was of historic significance. Czechoslovakia was currently taking steps to sign and ratify the Convention. He did not believe that the practical implementation of the Convention would present any substantial difficulties for his country, even in the context of its conversion from a centrally planned to a market economy.

3. His delegation considered the report of the Executive Director (E/ICEF/1990/2) to be stimulating and well-balanced; it also appreciated the integration of the Fund's various programme objectives for the 1990s, which were both demanding and realistic and did not involve any fundamental change in the orientation of its activities since they were organically linked to the child survival and development strategy, which remained valid. He was convinced that the development goals and strategies for children in the 1990s, which also encompassed the crucial needs in the area of environmental protection, could be more speedily accomplished, inter alia, through the convening of the World Summit for Children, and he reiterated his country's full support for that Summit.

4. His delegation also supported the project to extend the scope of UNICEF activities to reach all children of the world. While the problems of children in the industrialized and developing countries were often similar, the industrialized countries undoubtedly had a higher degree of responsibility for the destiny of their children. He welcomed the fact that UNICEF was also concerned with the children of Central and Eastern Europe, and, in view of the changing situation of

(Mr. Slaby, Observer, Czechoslovakia)

children in those areas, applauded the sending of a UNICEF study mission to Poland, Hungary and Czechoslovakia. He also supported the initiative taken by UNICEF to convene a round-table conference on the question of the conversion to a market economy, including its impact on the status of children in society.

5. The National Committees for UNICEF were playing an increasingly important role as intermediaries in the implementation of UNICEF policies in Central and Eastern Europe. The National Committees should maintain their independence and should be able to rely upon public support, a personnel policy and financial backing. The UNICEF Office at Geneva was the body with the best knowledge of the state of affairs in Europe and the situation of the National Committees for UNICEF. He was therefore concerned at the fact that UNICEF headquarters in New York was gradually but permanently taking over increasing responsibility for the National Committees from the UNICEF Office at Geneva. That tendency was neither justified nor in keeping with practical needs; he therefore recommended that further consideration should be given to the advisability of the most recent organizational measures relating to the responsibilities of the UNICEF Office at Geneva.

6. The Czechoslovak Committee for UNICEF had also substantially increased its activities: in May 1989, it had published in Czech the full text of the draft convention on the rights of the child; it had also helped to organize the animated film workshop and established close co-operation with the International Child Development Centre at Florence, and was currently preparing a report on the status of children in Czechoslovakia, which would be the first objective study of the subject in many years. The Czechoslovak Committee for UNICEF would be transformed into a social organization with an independent legal status, an event of decisive importance which would contribute to its increased participation in the implementation of UNICEF programme objectives, which Czechoslovakia fully supported.

7. Mr. GRANADA (Observer for Colombia) said that there was similarity between the principles of Colombia's development plan and those expressed by UNICEF in connection with "adjustment with a human face". The development plan involved a strenuous fight against poverty, a determination to achieve high economic growth rates, the effective control of inflation and the fulfilment of external debt obligations. To that end, in the context of increased productive investment, both public and private, reduced unemployment and a higher gross domestic product, Colombia had paid increasing attention to child health, protection and development programmes, particularly those involving children under seven years of age. The Government's most important innovation in that area had been the establishment of the Hogares de Bienestar (welfare centres) to offer nutrition, protection and pre-school education to children from two to seven years of age. In 1987, the year in which they were established, the Hogares de Bienestar had met the needs of 112,000 children, and it was estimated that in 1990 they would care for more than 800,000 children, in other words, two thirds of the Colombian pre-school child population; by 1994 it should be possible to achieve the goal of assisting all children from two to seven years of age living in extreme poverty, in other words, approximately 1,240,000 children, excluding the dispersed rural population. Through the Hogares, chronic child malnutrition had been eliminated and children

(Mr. Granada, Observer, Colombia)

could receive the care and protection they needed during the day while their parents were at work; they could also take part in educational activities which stimulated their intellectual and psychomotor development and promoted their socialization. Through the wide-ranging child protection programme, children were protected from abuse, mistreatment, serious accidents and the harmful consequences of street life. Families and communities had organized around the Hogares de Bienestar. In each neighbourhood, parents' associations had been trained to administer the programme collectively and to assume responsibility for it. Each mother cared for 15 children in her neighbourhood. Fifty thousand mothers had received training in nutrition, height and weight monitoring, educational activities, accident and illness prevention, and first aid. The programme had offered them new opportunities for personal growth and increased income. Recently, the Colombian Family Welfare Institute and the Ministry of Health had decided to enhance the positive impact of the Hogares de Bienestar through the reorientation and intensification of the maternal and child nutritional support programme, focusing it on children under two years of age, pregnant women and nursing mothers. In 1990, with the support of parents' associations at the national level, the programme would be able to care for 280,000 pregnant women or nursing mothers and as many children from four months to two years of age. It demonstrated Colombia's complete agreement with the priority accorded by UNICEF to maternal and child health.

8. Colombia had also adopted other measures in support of children. The Ministry of Health had performed an enormous task of social mobilization, organizing an immunization seminar and a campaign to eliminate poliomyelitis. In addition, it had participated actively in the UNICEF child survival programmes, in particular, by the widespread free distribution of oral rehydration salts for the treatment of diarrhoea, and by the intensified campaign against acute respiratory infections. Access to basic instruction had been increased, especially through the training of teachers to be integrated into the "New School", thanks to which thousands of rural children were attending schools adapted to their particular living conditions. To that must be added the establishment of libraries in all schools, the free supply of texts to children and the implementation of a programme for school refectories. Nevertheless, in addition to the economic problems, which impeded implementation of a social programme on such a vast scale, there were, in the case of Colombia, problems of law and order, attributable in particular to the drug traffic, which were causing immense material damage and loss of life. Fortunately, at recent high-level meetings on combating the use of and illicit traffic in drugs, emphasis had been laid on the need, not only to suppress the production, marketing and distribution of narcotic drugs but also to cut down consumer habits which fed the supply.

9. Also of special importance in that connection were the recommendations to provide additional support to UNICEF so as to enable it to expand its activities for children in particularly difficult circumstances, to improve the quality of life of rural women and to supply clean water and sanitary equipment in the Pacific zone. Furthermore, Colombia supported the convening of the World Summit for Children because the climate of East-West détente at the current phase in history,

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favoured cutting expenditure on armaments and was especially opportune for channelling resources towards co-operation for development and, especially, towards protecting and upgrading the education and health of children in absolute poverty. In addition, Colombia supported the principles in the Convention on the Rights of the Child, which formed part of Colombian legislation in so far as it had been incorporated into the Code of Minors. A bill to ratify the Convention would be submitted for consideration by the Congress of Colombia at its forthcoming session starting on 20 July 1990. Above all, it was necessary to build a civilization based on respect for the rights of the child as the point of departure for respecting all human rights.

10. Mr. RUIZ-JIMENEZ (Observer for Spain) thanked the UNICEF National Committees for their decision to hold their annual meeting in Barcelona in June 1990, a decision which Spain regarded as an honour. Spain would submit its candidature for the Executive Board of which it had been a member only once, during the period 1963-1965.

11. It was not necessary to recite the data on the situation of children throughout the world because the data were already known through the publications of UNICEF. For similar reasons, it was unnecessary to refer in detail to the mounting efforts of UNICEF to remedy vital shortages and the sufferings of every kind to which children were subjected. On the other hand, congratulations were certainly due to the Secretariat, the UNICEF National Committees and all the UNICEF services for their increasing efforts for children since the International Year of the Child (1979), although it had not yet been possible to attain the development pledges of that time. There was therefore an urgent need to centre both individual and collective responsibilities on urgent and redoubled efforts to meet the great challenge of the year 2000, namely, the creation of a "new earth" in justice, in peace for all human beings and, as a matter of priority, for all the children of the world. The UNICEF National Committee of Spain, with the collaboration of the Government, reiterated its pledge to increase its economic, cultural and political contribution at both the national and international levels towards achieving of the seven main goals of UNICEF specified in the medium-term plan for the period 1990-1993.

12. First of all, it was necessary to promote immediate implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, which was an exemplary historic leap forward in terms of international law and a qualitative advance on the 1959 Declaration of the Rights of the Child, which had been no more than a compendium of recommendations, whereas the Convention was mandatory. Spain was completing the process of ratifying the Convention and stated in its Constitution that "children should enjoy the protection provided for in the international agreements which safeguard their rights". It was desirable that the Convention should be ratified with as few reservations as possible because Spain was confident that agreement would be reached, at the World Summit for Children, on specific measures which would lead to effective implementation of the principles of the Convention. The UNICEF National Committees must contribute to the fruitful outcome of the Summit by contributing to its costs.

READEX FICHE

(Mr. Ruiz-Jimenez, Observer, Spain)

13. Secondly, the conviction must be reaffirmed that, while the Convention was a necessity, it would not be sufficient without a sustained political will for its effectiveness, monitored by the Committee on the Rights of the Child, and without increasing North-South co-operation involving all Governments, i.e. between the developed and the developing countries. In that connection, the possibility should not be overlooked that the need to deal with the pressing and serious economic, social and political problems of the countries of Eastern Europe might reduce the response to the demands of Asia, Africa and Latin America.

14. Thirdly, all States should be urged to look after the two sides, both North-South and East-West, simultaneously and without delay, bearing in mind that the same obligation of human solidarity was involved in both cases; the obligation was unavoidable and possible if efforts were redoubled for the achievement of a more equitable distribution of the material and cultural resources of the world for the purpose of establishing fairer international economic relations, transferring appropriate technologies, and solving the problem of the external indebtedness of many developing countries.

15. Fourthly, UNICEF action must be strengthened to the greatest extent possible by increasing the contributions of Governments and the resources provided by the respective civil corporations through the National Committees. While the total budget of UNICEF was almost $700 million, it was clearly insufficient given the magnitude of the objectives that had been set; it was therefore necessary to increase resources during the forthcoming three-year period. That effort was the responsibility of the Governments of the economically developed States but the efforts of the National Committees must not be less. Spain had increased its contribution by 125 per cent since 1986 and the Spanish population had responded to the needs of UNICEF to the point where, in 1989, it had reached a membership of 130,000 whose voluntary contributions had made it possible to cover 50 per cent of the annual budget of the Committee which was already reaching almost $10 million annually; in addition, 13 million cards had been sold, amounting to about $7 million in 1989, most of which had been transferred to UNICEF's general fund. It was also essential to strengthen the external relations of UNICEF because more direct and dynamic co-operation between the National Committees and the Secretariat would render the action of UNICEF throughout the world more effective.

16. Fifthly, it was important to universalize and intensify education for solidarity, from the level of families and basic schools to that of universities and the public relations media, because the development of a collective awareness of interdependence and co-participation in the sorrows and hopes of all human beings, together with appropriate legal, social, economic and political measures, would make it possible to build a more human world in which oppression, servitude and the suffering of children and youth would be remedied and the foundations laid for a true peace in freedom and justice.

17. Mr. NDIAYE (Observer for Mali) said that his country commended the efforts of UNICEF in connection with holding of the World Summit for Children. It would be a political forum that would give rise to realistic and valuable commitments to ensure children's survival, protection and development.

(Mr. Ndiaye, Observer, Mali)

18. In Mali, a developing country, the indicators for the state of health and education were discouraging. Statistics showed that the infant mortality rate was as high as 16.2 per cent and that only 23 per cent of men and 11 per cent of women were literate. Owing to that situation, the Government had accorded high priority to activities designed to ensure the well-being of mothers and children by initiating a medium-term national plan for the development of maternal and child health services, whose goals were in accordance with the objectives formulated by UNICEF in the medium-term plan for the period 1990-1993.

19. In the fields of universal child immunization, oral rehydration therapy and primary health care, significant advances had been made and should continue during the coming decade with the co-operation of communities, which had shown their enthusiasm for those activities; nevertheless, the available resources did not cover all the financing needs, so that the contribution of the international community was required.

20. Through the Bamako Initiative, the objective of which was to strengthen primary health care, an adequate solution was being sought for the health problems of the population. Mali had drawn up and applied a conceptual framework relating to the Initiative with a view to its implementation. To that end, as a result of the decisions adopted by the Government, it had been possible to facilitate the importation of 60 essential drugs, eliminating the list of equivalent special drugs, remove the customs tariffs imposed on those drugs and resort to international bidding in order to obtain the best prices. In order to pursue the national efforts relating to the Bamako Initiative, the assistance of the international community was required, while UNICEF should continue to play its leading role and set the example by allocating new resources and implementing innovations.

21. Mr. BRUCE (Chairperson, Standing Group of National Committees for UNICEF) said that the National Committees worked year round exclusively with UNICEF for UNICEF's goals and that they represented the grass-roots level of public opinion for UNICEF in 33 industrialized countries of Europe, the Americas and the Pacific. Their influence was reflected in the success that they had had in influencing Governments to increase their contributions and their support for UNICEF and in the fact that businesses, the health care sector, trade unions, academic institutions, the media and the religious community were working to promote the interests of children. The National Committees recognized the importance of co-operation and through the exchange of information and experience had high levels of professionalism, inter alia, as a result of the productive working relationship with the secretariat. That spirit of co-operation had continued to expand and strengthen, and the opportunity for frequent consultations with the Executive Director had further enhanced the Committees' efforts. As a result of the evaluation of external relations, in which the National Committees had participated, co-operation might be intensified and the Committees' work on behalf of the world's children enhanced.

(Mr. Bruce)

22. In 1989, the National Committees had contributed a total of $138 million to UNICEF, played an important role in supporting UNICEF's development activities and facilitated UNICEF's response to emergency situations in Afghanistan, the Caribbean, Ethiopia, Mozambique, Sudan and other countries. Almost half of that contribution had been the result of greeting card sales.

23. The National Committees played a leading role in the promotion of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, making good use of the broad-based grass-roots support to mobilize assistance from non-governmental organization partners, launch information campaigns and gather millions of signatures. Recognition of the crucial importance of the Convention for all the children of the world had caused the Committees to redouble their efforts and to press for ratification by their respective countries.

24. In addition to the great opportunity which it offered to promote the interests of children and realize lasting achievements in the areas of child survival and development, the World Summit for Children would enable the National Committees to strengthen their support to UNICEF. In that regard, some tangible results had been obtained, such as the making of new commitments and the forging of new partnerships on behalf of children in various countries and the consolidation of efforts in developing countries. The Summit was an unprecedented occasion to move children to the top of the international political and economic agenda.

25. As a part of UNICEF's global approach on behalf of children in difficult circumstances, the National Committees were giving special attention to the situation of children in Eastern Europe and trusted in the capacity of the Committees of those countries to stand up to those new challenges. The other National Committees were prepared to assist in that effort.

26. In May 1989, the thirty-fourth annual meeting of National Committees had been held in Geneva. It had provided opportunities for the exchange of experience between the Committees and with the Executive Director and secretariat staff. In September 1989, many Committees had participated in a workshop on education and fund-raising for development held in New York, and, in January 1990, heads of National Committees and information officers had met at Geneva. Extensive consultations had been conducted between the secretariat and the Committees on the preparation of effective fund-raising programmes through direct mail and on support for the universal child immunization goals. The Committees had also been represented at the World Conference on Education for All, held in Thailand. All those meetings had made it possible to strengthen the information base and professionalize the activities of the Committees. At the next annual meeting of the National Committees, to be held in June at Barcelona, two days would be devoted to a volunteer development forum for the sharing of experience with a view to broadening support for children during the 1990s. The challenges of the 1990s were great and might seem insuperable but for the knowledge that the National Committees had already overcome almost insurmountable odds in order to arrive at the point where they were today.

27. Mr. THOMSON (President, Non-Governmental Organizations Committee on UNICEF) referred to the changes that were taking place in the world situation and commended the speed with which UNICEF had reacted to ensure that children would be the first to benefit from the humanization of international relations. The future of children depended on the integration of development strategies at the national and international levels and on ensuring that those responsible for the adoption of political, economic and social decisions considered the consequences for children. The forthcoming Summit for Children constituted an opportunity to join forces and act with imagination, firmness and sensitivity. The Non-Governmental Organizations Committee was prepared to co-operate in the national and international preparations for the meeting, for which, inter alia, a non-governmental organizations forum was to be held on ways to reach the unreached, i.e., the weakest, the most vulnerable and the poorest. From that forum and the other consultations to be held by the non-governmental organizations, Governments and UNICEF in preparation for the World Summit, concrete suggestions would emerge for achieving access of all children to their right to education and health.

28. The NGO Committee had been in frequent dialogue throughout the past year with the Executive Board; mutual support and a rich exchange of ideas had been the result. The major points of common concern remained the access of all children, including the poorest, to basic services of health, nutrition, water and sanitation, the urgent need for ratification and implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, and application of the principles of education for all. The non-governmental organizations were working with Governments, providing information and documenting the situation of children with a view to accelerating ratification of the Convention and to its systematic implementation. In both the industrialized and the developing countries, gatherings of young people had been organized to share with them the content of the Convention and to identify ways in which they could themselves promote children's rights.

29. As reflected in the evaluation of UNICEF's external relations, its programme co-operation with the non-governmental organizations had been very fruitful. Good working relations also existed with the Standing Group of National Committees for UNICEF, and during the current year the NGO Committee had placed major emphasis on building new alliances with other United Nations agencies, such as the Department of Public Information and the Centre for Human Rights. The NGO Committee had worked with the sponsors of the World Conference on Education for All in order to mobilize the participation of non-governmental organizations which were at the cutting edge of educational innovation.

30. The non-governmental organizations, which had taken up the challenge of providing more educational opportunities for women and girls, delivered vast programmes in basic education, which could be a vehicle for improving health and achieving sustained development. The non-governmental organizations also intended to expand their global communication networks in order to bring education to the 100 million children - 60 per cent of whom were girls - with no access to basic education.

31. Mr. GRANT (Executive Director) said that the two days of debate had reflected winds of change and the opportunities which were opening up for the future of children.

32. World Summit for Children: The World Summit had been a predominant theme of the general debate and had received the support of over 52 delegations. However, the delegations of the Federal Republic of Germany and Italy had expressed concern about the progress of preparations for the Summit and the responsibility of the secretariat. He believed that the representative of Italy had spoken for all in underscoring that the Summit should be well planned, focused on selected issues and achievable goals, and lead to clear commitments for every country. At the same time, he was confident that the drafts to be prepared by the chairman of the working group on the declaration would reflect that consensus. The members of the Planning Committee shared the concern expressed by the representative of the Federal Republic of Germany over the pace of planning and the format of the Summit, but believed that consultations were necessary among delegations and Governments before any decisions were made. The representative of Norway had expressed concern that the Summit initiative was moving too rapidly, observing that his Government was not fully convinced of the cost-benefit ratio for children. The Executive Board had addressed the question at the 1989 session, with almost all members supporting the idea, and at the following session several Governments had begun serious consultations on the initiative. Over 20 delegations had affirmed that the World Summit presented an opportunity to accelerate attainment of UNICEF's principal goals, in the context of the fourth United Nations development decade. It was against those objectives that the success of the Summit, which required the participation of Governments at the highest level, would ultimately be measured.

33. Budget of the World Summit for Children: The Committee on Administration and Finance would need to resolve budgetary issues and find satisfactory answers to questions. The secretariat appreciated the willingness of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (ACABQ) to review rapidly the revised budgets for the Summit and for related mobilization activities. The Federal Republic of Germany and Japan had referred to concerns noted by ACABQ regarding transparency and the need for a precise description of the use of staff and consultants. For both the Summit and the mobilization activities, just 10 professional posts were being requested for a duration of only several months each, despite the enormous task of planning and preparation. Document E/ICEF/1990/AB/L.11 explained in detail the functions of the staff support required. Although the Board had authorized the secretariat to commence activities, up to specified ceilings, the posts were not filled until absolutely necessary, reflecting the concern for maximum economies but without undermining UNICEF's capacity to support the Summit and to take advantage of the programme opportunities which it presented. He assured the Board that the reduction of the originally proposed budgets by one quarter for the Summit and by one third for the mobilization activities, as the Board had instructed, had posed the most severe economies on planning, and he was convinced that the budget estimates were the minimal necessary to attain the set objectives. There was now an urgent need for the Board to authorize the secretariat to temporarily charge Summit-related expenses to receivable accounts. He also expressed his appreciation to the

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Governments and National Committees which had contributed or announced their intention to contribute.

34. Universal child immunization: 1990 was the target year for achieving universal child immunization, and it was heartening that so many countries were close to that goal. It seemed fitting to pay special tribute to the efforts of Mozambique and El Salvador, which had achieved some admirable results. Universal child immunization would not only save the lives of 3 million children annually but would also nurture confidence that even more ambitious goals could be achieved in the 1990s.

35. Sustainability: Many delegations had expressed concern about the sustainability of those efforts. Norway had felt that increased vaccination coverage could lead to neglect of longer-term investment in infrastructure. Nevertheless, the immunization campaign had highlighted the weakness of existing infrastructure in many countries and had prompted Governments to take corrective action. Furthermore, the structures used to deliver vaccines and oral rehydration therapy also served to deliver other primary health-care services. In addition, national capacity building was certainly a key concern in the planning of all UNICEF support, and 7 per cent of programme resources was devoted to training. The concern for sustainability had led many countries to conclude that many services would have to be self-financing, and Nigeria recognized that cost recovery in the supply of drugs was essential for financing health services.

36. Bamako Initiative: Many delegations had underlined the importance of the Bamako Initiative, which required urgent support from the donor community and the mobilization of appropriate levels of resources which would permit the phasing out of direct external support for the immunization of children in Africa. The delegations of Australia, Canada, the Federal Republic of Germany and Switzerland had expressed doubts about the potential of the Initiative to strengthen maternal and child health services and had emphasized the importance of community involvement at each step of the process. To reassure those delegations, he said that the experience gained in many countries was most encouraging, and he welcomed the offer of the United Kingdom to participate in a substantive evaluation of the Initiative which would be carried out during the last quarter of 1990. He also announced that an in-depth assessment of the conceptual framework of the Initiative had been carried out recently in Sierra Leone and that it was regarded as a useful means of ensuring the sustainability of universal child immunization and primary health care in Africa during the 1990s.

37. Goals and strategies for the 1990s: Several delegations had expressed support for the goals and strategies proposed for the decade and some had mentioned the need to adapt the goals to the reality of each country and the need for national capacity-building to ensure sustainability. As indicated in paragraph 75 of the 1990 policy review (E/ICEF/1990/L.5) and in paragraphs 70 and 71 of the medium-term plan (E/ICEF/1990/3) there were excellent examples of how global goals could be adapted to national plans, as the delegations of Bolivia, India and Indonesia had pointed out.

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38. He noted with appreciation the remarks of the delegations of Denmark and Norway on the greater balance among programme areas. He also welcomed the initiative taken by Switzerland in preparing a resolution on the goals for the 1990s. Regarding the comment by that delegation that maternal health seemed to be excluded from the priorities, he said that it was one of the highest priorities for the 1990s, as reflected in paragraphs 29 to 33 of the medium-term plan and in the policy paper on safe motherhood (E/ICEF/1990/L.13).

39. The Netherlands had pointed out that poverty was the underlying cause of the problems which UNICEF was striving to overcome. In document E/ICEF/1990/L.5 it was stated that the long-term viability of the goals for the 1990s was contingent on significant progress in alleviating critical poverty and the debt crisis, improved terms of trade and commodity agreements, and increased resource flows for development. That was why UNICEF complemented all its material and technical co-operation programmes with advocacy for "development with a human face". With regard to the doubt expressed by the Netherlands delegation concerning the ability of UNICEF to maintain the level of resources allocated to health, he said that, if UNICEF achieved the fund-raising goal of 6 per cent annual real growth, it would spend approximately $255 million on health (in 1993 prices). If, on the other hand, it achieved only the 3 per cent growth projected in the medium-term plan (a growth rate comparable to that for the previous decade), it would be spending approximately $250 million by the year 2000, compared with $240 million in 1990. There was no contradiction between increased spending in other programme areas and continued spending on health, since the experience gained in the 1980s showed that the major breakthroughs in child health would come through improved education, particularly for women and girls, better nutrition, safer water supply and improved sanitation.

40. With regard to the observations of the delegation of Australia, it should be noted that the percentages for each sector projected in the medium-term plan were indicative. Over the coming years, the progress made in each sector would be evaluated continually to ensure that expenditure projections corresponded to the priorities of the countries and to the capacity of UNICEF to support those priorities. The delegation of the United States of America could also be reassured that UNICEF did not consider that all goals were easily achievable in all countries, nor that they should be achieved at the same time. The least developed countries would be unable to attain most of the goals without extraordinary effort and major external support, while many developing countries would be able to set themselves even higher standards before the close of the century. What was proposed was that all countries should examine the feasibility of those goals and, based on their own situations and priorities, set their own targets for their planning cycles. As several delegations had stated, Africa should be given the greatest priority for increased attention from UNICEF in the 1990s.

41. Advocacy: The delegation of Italy had warned against increasing the resources devoted to global analysis and global advocacy, but it should be noted that UNICEF advocacy was based essentially in country programmes. The delegation of the Philippines had described advocacy and social mobilization as an integral part of

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the country programme. That should answer the concern expressed by the delegations of Denmark and the Federal Republic of Germany that a balance should be maintained between advocacy and programme delivery in the field. Advocacy and social mobilization were often the most cost-effective means of improving programme delivery. As experience with an immunization programme in Turkey had shown, advocacy led to political commitment and political commitment contributed to the success of programmes. Despite all that, the budget for advocacy was only 1.1 per cent of the total and the advocacy component should probably be higher if programme delivery was to be more effective.

42. Acute respiratory infections and the control of diarrhoeal diseases: Several delegation had expressed their support for activities related to acute respiratory infections and the control of diarrhoeal diseases. Diarrhoeal dehydration remained the single major cause of infant and child mortality and, as the delegation of Japan had stated, the control of diarrhoeal diseases must remain a major area of focus. The attention paid so far to the question of acute respiratory infections had been inadequate for several operational reasons. Operational protocols had now been finalized with WHO and the treatment regimen had been standardized. A policy review paper had been prepared for consideration by the Programme Committee and the reaction of several delegations had been most encouraging. In response to the delegation of Australia, he mentioned that a senior adviser on acute respiratory infections had been appointed and that the creation of a Child Survival Unit would provide the field with strong support in that new area of endeavour.

43. Acquired immunodeficiency syndrome: Several delegations had expressed concern about the impact of AIDS on women and children, as well as their appreciation for the work done by UNICEF in that field. UNICEF involvement in AIDS-prevention activities was being accelerated and an in-house consultation on AIDS had just been held with the participation of WHO, the International Children's Centre and UNICEF field staff, to analyse the experience gained and plan future joint measures. The growing problem of AIDS orphans was also being examined and support was being given to community activities to support orphans in Uganda.

44. Essential drugs: Some delegations had mentioned the question of essential drugs and, in particular, Denmark had encouraged the Secretariat to promote the rational use of drugs. UNICEF programmes relating to essential drugs involved not only the supply of drugs but also training programmes to promote their rational use, the standardization of treatment regimens and the establishment of logistics systems. Since essential drugs were a major element in the Bamako Initiative, the issues of pricing and equity were also important concerns.

45. Nutrition: A number of delegations had expressed their views on the programmes to improve the nutritional status of women and children, the control of micronutrient deficiencies and the need to reverse the decline of breastfeeding in developing countries. The representative of India, in particular, had pointed out that UNICEF should increase the programme expenditure for nutrition. While the programme priorities for the 1990s attested to that opinion, it should be remembered that improved nutritional status was the result of different

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interventions - including the control of infections, the provision of water and sanitation, the availability of food and micronutrients, the improved status of women, their level of literacy and disposable family income - and that the programme expenditure specified under nutrition did not necessarily reflect the total resources which had a more indirect impact on nutritional status.

46. Child spacing: Several delegations had mentioned the impact of rapid population growth and had welcomed the section on birth spacing and family planning in the policy review on safe motherhood (E/ICEF/1990/L.13). The statement of policy on that subject, set out in the document, was clear and forthright. UNICEF's commitment was to respond always to government policy and, in that context, to advocate the need for attention to the benefits of child spacing. Many programme actions provided important indirect support for lowering fertility, such as those relating to child survival and development, support of breastfeeding, education and women's employment activities. It was noteworthy that no major country since the Second World War had lowered its birth rate without first lowering its child death rates to a level at which the average family could reasonably be confident that its first children would survive. UNICEF's partnership with WHO and UNFPA was well established and the three partners would send a joint letter to their field staffs, emphasizing goals for the 1990s and suggesting ways in which field-level collaboration could be strengthened.

47. Social costs of urbanization: Some delegations had referred to the problems of urbanization which were visible in increased violence and the lowering of the standards of social conduct in big cities. Increased child labour and exploitation and poor environmental conditions were also responsible for tens of millions of preventable deaths each year. UNICEF addressed those problems by means of interventions in the sectors of immunization, nutrition and water and sanitation in many country programmes. Much remained to be done in collaboration with municipal authorities and financial institutions to develop both a comprehensive approach to urban problems and management schemes for co-ordinating the thousands of existing local initiatives.

48. Education: He welcomed the strong statements of support for the goals that had emerged from the World Conference on Education for All. The broad definition of basic education included such important aspects as the focus on early child development and on reducing disparities in educational opportunity, especially for girls and women. Every effort must be made to ensure that educational programmes for handicapped children were rooted in the family and community and were an integral part of mainstream educational opportunities. Several delegations had supported increased allocations to basic education in the Medium-Term Plan. The details of co-operation between agencies for the follow-up were being worked out and the new UNICEF/UNESCO Joint Committee on Education would be ready for discussion on concrete proposals in the autumn of 1990.

49. Water and sanitation: Several delegations had supported UNICEF's programmes of co-operation in water and sanitation which had been highly successful. Sanitation remained the major challenge and would be the focus of UNICEF's operations in the current Medium-Term Plan.

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50. Women: All the delegations which had spoken on the subject of women and development had emphasized the critical importance of UNICEF's co-operation in that area. UNICEF would continue to focus on redressing gender disparity in all programme areas.

51. Environment: Several delegations had referred to the need for attention to environmental degradation and its impact on children. The representatives of Norway and the Netherlands had underscored the important link between the high rate of population growth and strain on the environment. The representative of the Netherlands had recommended that the impact of environment on children should be included among the topics of the Summit deliberations. The representative of Poland had suggested that environmental concerns should be included in UNICEF's goals and strategies for the 1990s. UNICEF's priorities for that decade sought to improve the physical environment by combating diseases and malnutrition and promoting education.

52. Adjustment and debt relief: Many delegations had referred to the difficult economic circumstances and the debt burden of many countries in allocating additional funds to social programmes, particularly for activities benefiting children. Some delegations had noted that the issue of debt relief for children might be an important theme for the Summit. Many delegations had spoken of the need to give special attention to vulnerable groups during adjustment and transition periods and had commented on UNICEF's efforts to support "adjustment" and "development with a human face". Those efforts would be sustained during the 1990s. With regard to the debt relief schemes for children, UNICEF was co-operating with the Inter-American Development Bank in launching the "Human Investment" scheme for Latin America.

53. Evaluation: The delegations of Canada, France, Italy, Uganda, the United Kingdom and the United States had spoken on evaluation. Regional training workshops had been organized and emphasized the role of evaluation in the country programming process. The need to plan evaluations at the start of a programming cycle and methods for feeding those results into the next plan was emphasized. The inclusion of evaluation results in country programmes was also recommended. A data-base was being developed to summarize over 300 evaluations carried out every year, and field offices were kept informed of findings and recommendations. In addition, guidelines were being developed for the evaluation of new initiatives to be undertaken during the decade.

54. Emergency: The delegations of Egypt, Italy, Japan, the Sudan and the United States had expressed their appreciation for Operation Lifeline Sudan, which was indicative of their continued support for Phase Two of the Operation. The Government of Sudan had renewed its commitment to the concept of the corridors of peace which had made the success of phase one possible. The representative of Italy had asked about the efforts to strengthen UNICEF's capacity for responding to emergencies. In March, Mr. Charles Lamuniere, one of the Organization's most experienced persons in emergency work, had been appointed Director of UNICEF's Emergency Operations. UNICEF's collaboration with others in emergency operations

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had grown stronger over the years. In response to a question of the United States representative, he explained that UNICEF had many links with UNHCR at the country level. UNICEF had also participated in joint training courses with UNHCR and the World Food Programme on preparation and response to emergencies at the field level.

55. Central and Eastern Europe: Several delegations had expressed their views on the historic changes in Central and Eastern Europe and on possible programmatic responses. Board members were saying, first, that UNICEF needed to respond to the situation in the current transition period, when many children in Eastern and Central Europe were in obvious need. Second, in responding, UNICEF must ensure that there was no diversion of resources committed to the support of developing countries. Third, the proposed areas of action identified in the conference room paper on Eastern Europe were appropriate in relation to the current needs of the countries concerned. The issue yet to be resolved was whether or not general resources should go to supporting any of that endeavour. For support for workshops, consultants, technical exchange, etc., he had suggested a maximum of $1 million per year, the equivalent of a quarter of 1 per cent of general resources added to the programme expenditure foreseen in the medium-term plan. That option would be the simplest and the most transparent and would make for speed and flexibility of response and for broad-based support. UNICEF would also thus be able to use some of the non-convertible currencies that it had accumulated, which for the time being could not easily be used for assistance to other countries. He had no doubt at all that if UNICEF was seen as being concerned with the needs of children in Eastern Europe at the current time of difficult transition the higher level of voluntary contributions would exceed $1 million by far. It was also worth noting that UNDP and UNFPA both had general resource programmes in Eastern Europe.

56. Inter-agency co-operation: A number of speakers had mentioned the interdisciplinary nature of UNICEF's work and the special benefits that derived from the partnership of many organizations acting as an alliance for children. UNICEF had placed particular emphasis on supporting the joint United Nations efforts to achieve greater impact through a rational approach to development co-operation, and it had a special responsibility to improve co-ordination. The Deputy Executive Director for Programmes had chaired the Consultative Committee on Substantive Questions (Operational Activities) over the past two years, and it was encouraging that delegations wished UNICEF to continue with that, even though it required considerable staff time, often at a relatively senior level. Experience had shown that in order to achieve successful collaboration, clear consensus goals needed to be articulated and adopted. UNICEF's goals and strategies for the 1990s were linked to the important question of inter-agency collaboration. The Programme Committee would have the opportunity to discuss such matters as the emerging UNFPA/WHO/UNICEF agreement on common efforts to strengthen the resident co-ordinator system and collaboration in country programming processes.

57. Convention on the Rights of the Child: Virtually all delegations had expressed satisfaction at the adoption of the Convention, and more than 20 delegations had announced that the process of ratification was already under way in their countries. Particularly gratifying was the Convention's obvious importance

as a framework for efforts to improve the situation of children; there was an integral relationship between the commitment of such global initiatives and planning at the national level, just as there was a link between the Convention and the World Summit for Children. That was an example of the mutual reinforcement of international initiatives.

58. Funding: Many donors had reaffirmed their commitment to continued financial support for UNICEF, especially through contributions to general resources. As large as possible a proportion of UNICEF funding should be for general resources; however, UNICEF understood that many donors were unable, for various reasons, to confine their support to general resources. Some delegations had expressed concern at the increase in supplementary funding, but it was noteworthy that in 1989 supplementary contributions had dropped by some 20 per cent and contributions to general resources had risen by approximately 7 per cent.

59. National Committees: He welcomed participation at the current session by nearly two thirds of the National Committees for UNICEF, whose valuable work had been referred to by many delegations. The National Committees had not only contributed $138 million to UNICEF in the past year, but had made UNICEF a household name in the industrialized countries through their advocacy and mobilization efforts. As shown in the evaluation of UNICEF external relations, the effectiveness of activities depended to a very large extent on the flow of communication between the National Committees and the secretariat. Most of the National Committees were now mobilizing support for the World Summit for Children, and nearly half of the Committees had already made contributions for mobilization activities.

60. Non-governmental organizations: Such organizations were a basic prerequisite in any sustained development initiative, a fact that was recognized by UNICEF and had been underscored by many delegations. The successes of action for child survival and development had been possible as a result of the building of alliances between international agencies, Governments and non-governmental organizations. The past year had also seen dramatic evidence of the importance of assistance from non-governmental organizations in the area of child rights. The non-governmental organizations deserved much credit for mobilizing the will that had brought about the adoption of the Convention on the Rights of the Child. Furthermore, they were now helping to accelerate the ratification process. UNICEF and the United Nations system would need to rely on such collaboration to realize the "Education for All" goals, and it was to be hoped that, by concentrating on "doable" objectives, the international community would find better ways of co-ordinating and strengthening the work already under way on behalf of children, with the invaluable assistance of the non-governmental organizations.

61. External relations evaluation and report: Advocacy and social mobilization were of increasing strategic importance for UNICEF programmes. He hoped that UNICEF could live up to the expectations of the Nigerian representative, whose Government had such faith in UNICEF's efforts to put forward its cause. Mexico's national solidarity campaign underlined the importance of advocacy for attitudinal change. As suggested by a number of delegations, advocacy and direct programme

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activities were mutually supportive and represented a cost-effective way of increasing programme delivery at the country level. Specific advocacy efforts must be defined and applied locally, within the country context, and be planned carefully as part of the country programme. The bulk of UNICEF's advocacy efforts took place in that context and would continue to do so. The "spectacular" advocacy referred to by Denmark were opportunities resulting from factors outside the realm of UNICEF influence that offered such potential for advancing the cause of children that it would be wrong not to grasp them; they were "extraordinary" opportunities that were complementary to UNICEF's ongoing advocacy efforts.

62. The secretariat had found the evaluation most helpful and pertinent, and was following the relevant recommendations as it planned for the 1990s. In fact, steps had already been taken to implement some recommendations, such as an evaluation of publications and information services, the establishment of the External Relations Committee and, in general, a more planned strategic and integrated approach to external relations activities. A number of delegations had commented on the importance of the Geneva Office and the role it could be expected to play in the 1990s. UNICEF appreciated the importance of the Geneva Office in the European context and would be reviewing its needs in the budget review in the autumn.

63. Operations issues: He had listened very carefully to Board members' concerns on operational issues. The constructive practice of holding a frank and open debate on issues of importance in the areas of finance, administration and supply had been continued at the current session.

64. Procurement: Egypt, India and the Philippines had mentioned the important role that UNICEF's procurement policy could play in encouraging industry and capacity-building in developing countries. UNICEF recognized the importance of increasing country procurement in helping to develop national capacity, as demonstrated by the increase in the value of its purchase orders placed in developing countries from $56 million in 1988 to $78 million in 1989, an increase from 23 per cent to 28 per cent of total procurement. As the range of commodities available in developing countries continued to increase, new sources for UNICEF procurement activities would be identified. The representative of India had suggested that UNICEF should consider a change in procurement policies, giving preference to local industry without compromising quality of products. No change in policy was required for that, since UNICEF already followed that principle. As an example, in 1989 the value of purchase orders placed by UNICEF with suppliers in India had exceeded that of every other country in the world other than Japan.

65. Staffing: Several delegations had commended the staff of UNICEF for their hard work and dedication. UNICEF staff were quite frequently called upon to work long hours under extremely difficult circumstances, often with no break over extended periods. On behalf of all UNICEF staff, he wished to express his gratitude for the remarks in question.

The meeting rose at 12.55 p.m.

UNITED
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1 May 1990

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UNITED NATIONS CHILDREN'S FUND

EXECUTIVE BOARD

1990 regular session

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 7th MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Friday, 27 April 1990, at 11.35 a.m.

Chairman: Miss DIEGUEZ (Mexico)

CONTENTS

Statements by the Chairmen of the Programme Committee and the Committee on Administration and Finance

Adoption of resolutions and decisions

Future work and procedures of the Executive Board

Other business

Concluding remarks by the Executive Director and the Chairman of the Executive Board

Closure of the session

This record is subject to correction.

Corrections should be submitted in one of the working languages. They should be set forth in a memorandum and also incorporated in a copy of the record. They should be sent to Ms. M. A. Cuna, Office of the Secretary of the Executive Board, room H-12K, UNICEF House, 3 United Nations Plaza, New York.

Any corrections to the records of the meetings of this session will be consolidated in a single corrigendum, to be issued shortly after the end of the session.

The meeting was called to order at 11.35 a.m.

STATEMENTS BY THE CHAIRMEN OF THE PROGRAMME COMMITTEE AND THE COMMITTEE ON ADMINISTRATION AND FINANCE (E/ICEF/1990/AB/L.15, E/ICEF/1990/CRP.11-20, 22-25, 27 and 29-30, E/ICEF/1990/P/L.44 and Add.1)

1. Mr. MAJOOR (Netherlands), Chairman of the Programme Committee, introduced the report of that Committee (E/ICEF/1990/P/L.44 and Add.1) and drew attention, in particular, to the draft resolutions in paragraphs 5, 8 and 9 of document E/ICEF/1990/P/L.44 and the two draft resolutions in document E/ICEF/1990/P/L/44/Add.1. In the operative paragraph of the draft resolution on safe motherhood (E/ICEF/1990/P/L.44, para. 8) "1980" should be changed to "1990". He then drew attention to a number of draft recommendations in documents E/ICEF/1990/CRP.11-20, 22-25, 27 and 29-30, which were submitted to the Executive Board for adoption, subject to the following modifications: in document E/ICEF/1990/CRP.14, paragraph 5 should be deleted; and in document E/ICEF/1990/CRP.24, paragraph 5 should be changed to read "Requests the Executive Director to highlight the girl child in the annual progress report on women in development and to submit a full report on progress made on the situation of the girl child to the 1992 session of the Executive Board and every second year thereafter".

2. The draft resolutions recommended by the Programme Committee in documents E/ICEF/1990/P/L.44 and Add.1 and the draft recommendations submitted in documents E/ICEF/1990/CRP.11-20, 22-25, 27 and 29-30, as amended, were adopted.

3. Mr. DE LA CHEVALERIE (France), referring to document E/ICEF/1990/CRP.19, said that, while his delegation had not wished to stand in the way of a consensus on that draft recommendation, it felt that the role of the UNICEF Office at Geneva should be underscored. For reasons of geographical proximity, decentralization and the need to develop relations with other organizations of the United Nations system, especially the World Health Organization and the International Labour Organisation, which were already carrying out activities on behalf of Central and Eastern Europe, the Office should be directly involved in co-ordinating the actions undertaken to implement the draft recommendation. It was in that sense that his delegation interpreted paragraph 1 (c) of the recommendation. In view of the tasks undertaken by the Geneva Office, particularly with regard to the National Committees for UNICEF in Central and Eastern Europe, its staffing should be increased and its sphere of authority should be clearly defined and enhanced, so as to enable it to discharge appropriately the responsibilities of UNICEF in Europe.

4. Miss ZINDOGA (Zimbabwe) said that Liberia should be added to the sponsors of the draft recommendation in document E/ICEF/1990/CRP.17. Moreover, in the second preambular paragraph, the words "against Apartheid" should be added after the words "Special Committee".

5. Ms. BADRAN (Egypt), Chairman of the Committee on Administration and Finance, introduced the report of that Committee (E/ICEF/1990/AB/L.15). She drew attention to the documents which had been reviewed and noted by the Committee, listed in sections VIII, IX and XI of the report, and to the draft recommendations in sections II-VII, X and XII, which had been submitted to the Executive Board for adoption.

6. The draft recommendations submitted by the Committee on Administration and Finance in document E/ICEF/1990/AB/L.15 were adopted.

ADOPTION OF RESOLUTIONS AND DECISIONS

7. The CHAIRMAN said that only one draft recommendation remained to be considered by the Executive Board, and she suggested that it should be taken up under the next agenda item.

FUTURE WORK AND PROCEDURES OF THE EXECUTIVE BOARD (E/ICEF/1990/CRP.28)

8. The CHAIRMAN drew attention to the draft recommendation on the future work and procedures of the Executive Board (E/ICEF/1990/CRP.28).

9. Ms. SKARD (Observer for Norway) said that her delegation appreciated the work accomplished in recent weeks. UNICEF was undergoing changes and there was a need to learn from the experience gained at the current session.

10. Continued efforts should be made to reduce the number and length of documents submitted. At the current session, the Board had been faced with 2,000 pages of documentation. The Bureau and the secretariat must find ways to rationalize the situation, possibly by limiting the total number of pages issued for the next session of the Board to 1,000. In view of the problems caused by the late arrival of many documents, the six-week deadline for the submission of documents by the secretariat should be retained. With regard to the number of draft resolutions submitted, delegations should consider whether it was necessary to present their proposals in that form or whether their views could be expressed by being incorporated into the report of the Executive Director.

11. Concerning the schedule of meetings, there should be as few parallel meetings as possible, and all delegations should be informed of what was being discussed and where the meetings were being held. Since 1991 would be a budget year, care should be taken not to allocate too much time to the Committee on Administration and Finance, thus putting the Programme Committee under pressure.

12. The Board had not yet found the best way of dealing with country programmes; the Bureau and the secretariat should discuss that question.

13. The CHAIRMAN said that much remained to be done to improve the work and procedures of the Board; greater discipline was needed. Thirty-one meetings had been held during the current session, which was not taking place during a budget year.

14. Mr. VAHER (Canada) endorsed the comments made by the observer for Norway. While supporting the draft recommendation, his delegation felt that more work was needed. He did not favour the establishment of a formal working group, but suggested that, in accordance with decision 1989/3, the Bureau should continue to update the Rules of Procedure and to examine matters related to the organization of work of the Executive Board, with a view to presenting its recommendations in 1991.

15. The CHAIRMAN said that, if she heard no objections, she would take it that the Board agreed to that proposal.

16. It was so decided.

17. Mr. DE LA CHEVALERIE (France), supported by Mr. ALIHONOU (Benin), expressed appreciation to the secretariat for the more rapid translation into French of the documents submitted during the session. The documents received before the session had arrived too late for consultations with the ministries concerned.

18. Mr. WILLIAMS (Secretary of the Executive Board) said, with regard to section 4 of document E/ICEF/1990/CRP.28, that he had been informed by the Programme Planning and Budget Division of the United Nations that the cost of holding a two-day organizational session of the Board with four meetings was estimated at $US 98,200, but that, on the understanding that it would be held in January every year and scheduled in consultation with the Department of Conference Services to ensure that it was serviced from within permanent resources, the addition of the session to the United Nations calendar of conferences and meetings would not give rise to additional costs. That information had been taken into account when discussing possible dates for the organizational session to be held in January 1991.

19. The draft recommendation contained in document E/ICEF/1990/CRP.28 was adopted.

OTHER BUSINESS

20. The CHAIRMAN suggested that the organizational session to elect the Bureau of the next Board should be held on 7 June 1990; the special session of the Board on the World Summit for Children on 6 and 7 September 1990; the organizational session of the next Board on 28 and 29 January 1991; and the next regular session of the Board from 22 April to 3 May 1991. A list had been circulated of documents requested for future sessions of the Board, and she suggested that the Bureau should decide when it met in June 1990 which documents should be submitted separately and which should form part of the report of the Executive Director.

21. If she heard no objection, she would take it that the Board wished to adopt those suggestions.

22. It was so decided.

CONCLUDING REMARKS BY THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR AND THE CHAIRMAN OF THE EXECUTIVE BOARD

23. Mr. GRANT (Executive Director) said that the current session would be regarded as a milestone for UNICEF in the last part of the twentieth century. In the next 10 years more progress could be made on behalf of children than in any previous decade; each of the goals and strategies set during the session was individually achievable, and collectively they added up to the most ambitious effort that had ever been made for children. The courage to set goals for the 1990s had been reinforced by the adoption by the world community of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, which in turn had benefited from the progress made in universal child immunization and oral rehydration therapy. The challenge of the goals set by the session was to sustain what had been accomplished and to broaden action into other areas such as acute respiratory infection, acquired immunodeficiency syndrome, the reduction of the incidence of measles, improved water and sanitation, and the achievement of primary education for all. The greatest challenge was to transform goals into achievements, for example, to eradicate poliomyelitis and guinea worm disease as well as to reduce the under-five and maternal mortality rates. Action in Africa was particularly urgent, and he called for continued and additional assistance in support of the Bamako Initiative.

24. The main challenge of the World Summit for Children was to replicate for a score of individually achievable goals in the 1990s the same kind of mobilization of political leadership that had achieved such dramatic results for a limited number of goals, notably universal child immunization, in the 1980s. A second challenge for the Summit was to identify and encourage greater action in other forums on child-related issues whose solutions were not as readily achievable as those that had been singled out in the goals and strategies adopted by the Board at its current session.

25. The general challenge was to restructure aid in order to give much more support to sectors which reflected the human dimensions of development, for example, to primary health care and basic education. Much more could now be done for the children of the world, and the challenge was to discover the means to ensure that children had first call on society's concerns and capacities both in bad times and in good. The World Summit for Children would provide an unprecedented opportunity for mobilizing action to achieve long-overdue goals at the highest political level.

26. He expressed his appreciation to the UNICEF staff members who had stepped down during the past year or who were about to leave, and paid a special tribute to Nancy Sadka, who had died in 1989.

27. He also paid a special tribute to Jena Hlass, a National Programme Assistant in Beirut, who had been dragged from her car and shot while she was on her way to work in December 1989. Board members would remember that Nabila Breir had been killed in the same fashion in Beirut exactly two years earlier. The courageous staff of the entire Beirut office, under the able leadership of André Roberfroid, had continued to cover almost every corner of Lebanon regularly, even in the current conditions of conflict. In April, three vaccination days had been held in

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Lebanon following an appeal from UNICEF/Beirut to all factions in conflict for a cease-fire. A total of 26,000 children had been vaccinated, and another three-day cease-fire had been negotiated for May, raising very reasonable expectations that Lebanon would achieve universal child immunization before the end of 1990. In that connection, he was pleased to announce that a staff award would be presented to the entire staff of the Beirut office as a team.

28. He was encouraged to note the spirit of co-operation which had always prevailed between the Board and UNICEF. In particular, the goals and strategies for the 1990s, a new commitment to education for all, progress towards ratification and implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the achievement of universal child immunization in 1990, and, finally, the forthcoming World Summit for Children all signalled a historic breakthrough for the children of the world.

29. The CHAIRMAN noted with satisfaction that the Board had accomplished a great deal during the current session, thanks to its flexibility in responding to changes in the world political scene and its ability to reach agreement on potentially controversial issues, such as those relating to children in South Africa and Eastern Europe and to family planning. The adoption by consensus of the Uruguayan proposal on child development and the decision to emphasize the needs of girls were also significant developments.

30. In future, UNICEF would have to expand its sphere of action to deal not only with the survival of children, but also with their sound physical and mental development and the protection of their rights; in particular, it must prepare itself to respond to the new challenge awaiting it when the Convention on the Rights of the Child entered into force. In her travels, she had realized how important it was for UNICEF to increase its presence in individual countries.

CLOSURE OF THE SESSION

31. After an exchange of courtesies, the CHAIRMAN declared the session closed.

The meeting rose at 1 p.m.

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EXECUTIVE BOARD

1990 organizational session

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 8th MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Monday, 25 June 1990, at 10 a.m.

Chairman: Mrs. DIEGUEZ (Mexico)

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Election of the first, second, third and fourth Vice-Chairmen of the Executive Board

Election of the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Programme Committee

Election of the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Committee on Administration and Finance

Election of UNICEF representatives on the UNICEF/WHO Joint Committee on Health Policy

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The meeting was called to order at 10.35 a.m.

OPENING OF THE SESSION

1. The CHAIRMAN declared open the first organizational session of the Executive Board for 1990-1991. The session was being convened for the purpose of electing officers of the Board for the period 1 August 1990 to 31 July 1991 and electing the UNICEF representation on the UNICEF/WHO Joint Committee on Health Policy.

2. She drew attention to the provisional agenda (E/ICEF/1990/L.18), the information note on the organizational session (E/ICEF/1990/L.19) and the rules of procedure (E/ICEF/177/Rev.5 and Corr.1). She read out rule 12 regarding the election procedure.

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

3. The agenda was adopted.

ELECTION OF THE CHAIRMAN OF THE EXECUTIVE BOARD

4. Ms. AGUILERA (Mexico) nominated Mrs. Palme (Sweden) for the office of Chairman of the Executive Board for 1990-1991.

5. Ms. ZINDOGA (Zimbabwe) and Mr. KUDRIYVTSEV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) seconded the nomination.

6. Mrs. Palme (Sweden) was elected Chairman of the Board for 1990-1991 by acclamation.

ELECTION OF THE FIRST, SECOND, THIRD AND FOURTH VICE-CHAIRMEN OF THE EXECUTIVE BOARD

7. The CHAIRMAN said it was her understanding that, as a result of consultations among delegations, Ms. Seth (India) had been nominated for the office of First Vice-Chairman; Dr. Schneeweiss (German Democratic Republic) for Second Vice-Chairman; Mr. Piriz Ballon (Uruguay) for Third Vice-Chairman; and Mrs. Abdalla (Sudan) for Fourth Vice-Chairman. If she heard no objection, she would take it that the Board agreed to the election of those candidates.

8. It was so decided.

ELECTION OF THE CHAIRMAN AND VICE-CHAIRMAN OF THE PROGRAMME COMMITTEE

9. Mrs. SYAHRUDDIN (Indonesia) nominated Mr. Fernandez (Liberia) for the office of Chairman of the Programme Committee.

10. Mr. PASHKEVICH (Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic) seconded the nomination.

11. Mr. Fernandez (Liberia) was elected Chairman of the Programme Committee by acclamation.

12. The CHAIRMAN said it was her understanding that, following consultations among delegations, Mr. Chowdhury (Bangladesh) had been nominated for the office of Vice-Chairman of the Programme Committee. If she heard no objection, she would take it that the Board agreed to the election of Mr. Chowdhury.

13. It was so decided.

ELECTION OF THE CHAIRMAN AND VICE-CHAIRMAN OF THE COMMITTEE ON ADMINISTRATION AND FINANCE

14. Mr. MAJOOR (Netherlands) nominated Mr. Ward (Canada) for the office of Chairman of the Committee on Administration and Finance.

15. Mr. DENEGRI (Peru) seconded the nomination.

16. Mr. Ward (Canada) was elected Chairman of the Committee on Administration and Finance by acclamation.

17. The CHAIRMAN said it was her understanding that, following consultations among delegations, Mrs. Springer (Barbados) had been nominated for the office of Vice-Chairman of the Committee on Administration and Finance. If she heard no objection, she would take it that the Board agreed to the election of Mrs. Springer.

18. It was so decided.

ELECTION OF UNICEF REPRESENTATIVES ON THE UNICEF/WHO JOINT COMMITTEE ON HEALTH POLICY

19. The CHAIRMAN said that the next session of the UNICEF/WHO Joint Committee on Health Policy was scheduled for 28 to 30 January 1991. The UNICEF representation comprised the Chairman of the Executive Board and the Chairman of the Programme Committee as ex-officio members, plus four representatives elected in their personal capacity and two alternate representatives.

20. It was her understanding that, in addition to the ex-officio members, Mrs. Ashton (Bolivia), Mrs. Mbella Ngomba (Cameroon), Dr. Yahya (Indonesia) and Dr. Manley (United States of America) had been proposed as representatives to the Joint Committee; and that Mrs. Springer (Barbados) and Dr. Schneeweiss (German Democratic Republic) had been proposed as alternate representatives. If she heard no objection, she would take it that the Board agreed to the election of those candidates.

21. It was so decided.

22. The CHAIRMAN said that, since the Executive Board of the World Health Organization (WHO) would meet from 14 to 25 January 1991, the Joint Committee on Health Policy would meet from 28 to 30 January 1991 in Geneva. Therefore, the organizational session of the UNICEF Executive Board originally planned for the end of January would take place on 4 and 5 February 1991.

23. Mr. GRANT (Executive Director) paid tribute to the outgoing members and officers of the Board, in particular the Chairman, and welcomed the new members and officers. He doubted whether there had ever been a more active or more important year for children at UNICEF: 1989-1990 had seen the ratification of the Convention on the Rights of the Child by the General Assembly; the unprecedented World Conference on Education for All; the admission of Namibia as a new Member, with strong UNICEF involvement; the adoption in a radically new manner of the 1990 goals and strategies for children, and the decision to hold the World Summit for Children.

24. He wished to report on three matters. The terrible earthquake in Iran, a mammoth tragedy whose dimensions were not yet fully known, had required an immediate UNICEF response. The first planeload of emergency supplies had landed that very day and a UNICEF team would be in Iran in the course of the week to determine appropriate further measures. There were reasonable prospects that the Convention on the Rights of the Child might be ratified by September, as hoped. As to the World Summit for Children, good progress was being made under the direction of the 30-member Planning Committee on both the format for the Summit and its final plan and declaration. Twenty-five heads of State had replied that they would attend and more than 15 others seriously expected to come.

25. The CHAIRMAN declared the session closed.

The meeting rose at 11.20 a.m.

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EXECUTIVE BOARD

1990 special session on the World Summit for Children

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 9th MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Thursday, 6 September 1990, at 10 a.m.

Chairman: Mrs. PALME (Sweden)

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This record is subject to correction.

Corrections should be submitted in one of the working languages. They should be set forth in a memorandum and also incorporated in a copy of the record. They should be sent to Ms. M. A. Cuna, Office of the Secretary of the Executive Board, room H-12K, UNICEF House, 3 United Nations Plaza, New York.

Any corrections to the records of the meetings of this session will be consolidated in a single corrigendum, to be issued shortly after the end of the session.

The meeting was called to order at 10.40 a.m.

OPENING OF THE SPECIAL SESSION

1. The CHAIRMAN declared open the special session on the World Summit for Children and explained the procedure to be followed to facilitate the consideration of items on the agenda.

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA (E/ICEF/1990/15)

2. Ms. EHRENREICH (Denmark) said that she did not want to propose any amendments to the agenda. Instead, since there was so little time available, she requested the secretariat to distribute as soon as possible the draft decision concerning the report on family planning which UNICEF had been asked to prepare.

The agenda was adopted.

OPENING STATEMENTS BY THE CHAIRMAN OF THE EXECUTIVE BOARD AND THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

3. Mrs. PALME (Chairman of the Executive Board) briefly described the context in which the special session was being held and emphasized the need for Governments to stop placing children, who were both the victims of mankind's self-destructive forces and the potential heroes of a bright future, low on their list of practical priorities. That was not an easy task and would require determination, resources, courage and perseverance. What was needed to secure the future of humankind was a fundamental shift in values, a process that was already under way and was manifested in UNICEF's programmes for children.

4. The World Summit for Children offered a rare opportunity to accelerate mobilization and progress. For a day, the attention of the world's leaders and world public opinion would be focused on an intense debate, and UNICEF must make sure that every minute achieved maximum impact and that the expression of determination contained in the Declaration and the Plan of Action became real working instruments for building a better future.

5. The World Summit for Children was part of a continuing process whose achievements already included the entry into force of the Convention on the Rights of the Child. Every effort must be made to ensure that child survival, protection and development were given top priority in the allocation of society's resources.

6. She commended the work that had gone into the preparations for the World Summit and trusted that all Governments would undertake their duties thoroughly but expeditiously, reviewing the situation and their own national contributions in the light of what had already been achieved and of the vastly increased attendance, responsibilities and potential that now seemed assured, while also bearing in mind the Summit's place within the broader framework of ambitions for the future of the world's children.

7. Mr. GRANT (Executive Director), referring to UNICEF's response to the Middle East situation and its impact on children, drew attention to a paper on key developments relevant to UNICEF.

8. The Executive Board's role in drafting the Declaration and Plan of Action of the World Summit and in determining the format of the Summit was an advisory one, while its participation was essential for authorizing budgets for the World Summit, for supporting mobilization and other activities associated with the Summit and for increasing awareness of and strengthening commitment to programmes for children.

9. On present indications, the World Summit was going to be the largest gathering of Heads of State or Government in history. Only 30 Heads of State or Government had declined the invitation to attend and 42 had yet to be heard from. There had also been broad support for the preparations for the World Summit.

10. Two beneficial results already achieved during preparations for the World Summit had been the entry into force of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, which had so far been signed by 105 countries and ratified by 34, and the added boost given in many countries to the final drive towards universal child immunization (UCI) by the end of the year. The UCI campaign, and consequently millions of children, had been one of the major beneficiaries of mobilization around the objectives of the World Summit.

11. Other progress included the holding in Sierra Leone of nearly 200 mini-summits involving decision-makers, teachers, health professionals and non-governmental workers. In a national opinion poll taken in Ecuador, Ecuadorian children had singled out as their most important right the right to protection from drugs, sexual abuse and all forms of violence, their second choice being the right to be informed by the Government, schools and parents of what their rights were.

12. Such efforts had been designed both to raise public awareness and to generate additional mobilization and resources, particularly among governmental, non-governmental and religious organizations. Their results were not only mutually reinforcing but also reinforced the goals for children and development in the 1990s, which in turn were showing how the World Summit for Children was already beginning to have an impact on the future.

13. The draft Declaration sought support for the Plan of Action not only from the United Nations system, regional and other international bodies, national Governments and non-governmental organizations but also from children themselves as partners in the process.

14. The draft Plan of Action was intended as a follow-up implementation guide for national Governments, international organizations, bilateral aid agencies, non-governmental organizations and, indeed, all sectors of society. It stressed that progress for children should be not only a key goal of overall national development but also an integral part of the broader international development strategy for a fourth United Nations development decade. He clarified the content of some paragraphs of the draft Plan of Action and then explained why it had been

(Mr. Grant)

necessary to request an increase in the budget for the World Summit, contributions to which could be received after as well as before the actual date of the Summit. Even at that increased level, the costs of the Summit would be far lower than those of any other major summit.

15. On 28 and 29 September respectively, before the Summit even met, the Child Survival Task Force and the Tidewater Group of ministers and development agency heads would be meeting to consider follow-up action.

16. A number of conferences and world meetings had already emphasized the need to advance the interests of children. The World Bank and UNDP had concluded with UNICEF that development began with people and that the well-being of children was not only a principal objective of people-centred development but also a major means of achieving that development.

INTRODUCTION OF THE PROGRESS REPORT ON THE WORLD SUMMIT FOR CHILDREN, THE DRAFT WORLD DECLARATION ON THE SURVIVAL, PROTECTION AND DEVELOPMENT OF CHILDREN AND THE DRAFT PLAN OF ACTION (E/ICEF/1990/16, E/ICEF/1990/L.20)

17. Mr. FORTIER (Canada), speaking as Co-Chairman of the Planning Committee for the World Summit for Children, expressed appreciation to all who had participated in the preparations for the meeting; they had set a truly encouraging example of what could be attained with good will and a spirit of co-operation. He recalled that during the April session of the Executive Board, it had been decided that the current meeting would have three objectives: to inform the Executive Board of the state of preparations for the Summit up to that point; to review the draft Declaration and draft Plan of Action and the format of the Summit, and to re-examine the budgetary aspects of the Summit with a view to establishing revised budgetary estimates and seek authorization for expenditures.

18. In his view, all indicators now strongly suggested that the Summit would live up not only to expectations but perhaps even to some of the organizers' dreams. Since April, the number of Heads of State or Government who had confirmed their intention to participate in the Summit had increased fivefold. Today, 77 Heads of State or Government had decided to make time in their busy schedules to come to New York to discuss what action could be taken to improve the situation of children around the world, as an expression of their special interest in children.

19. The draft Declaration and draft Plan of Action had been drawn up and had been presented to the Board. The structure and format of the Summit had also been established, and all arrangements were being put into effect.

20. In April 1990, the Planning Committee had reported that voluntary contributions to the special accounts for the World Summit and mobilization activities represented half or less of the budget estimates. Since that time, contributions and pledges had exceeded the original target for the meeting by more than a third and almost 80 per cent of the mobilization budget was now secured, all of which testified to the extreme generosity of so many Governments.

(Mr. Fortier, Canada)

21. Not surprisingly, the success in encouraging so many Heads of State and Government to attend the Summit had not come without its price. That price was higher than that originally envisaged in December 1989, when a much smaller meeting was expected. The initiating Governments had requested that there should be a revised budget which reflected that new reality. The Planning Committee believed that it was still a minimum budget that reflected only the essentials. The initiating Governments remained adamant that UNICEF regular programming should not be adversely affected by the Summit activities, but rather that the Summit should serve to enhance and strengthen regular programmes. It was heartening to note that the World Summit was already producing demonstrable benefits; one of the most notable was the fact that, in less than a year, the necessary number of signatures had been secured to bring into force as international law the Convention on the Rights of the Child. No other international human rights instruments had ever been ratified as quickly, and that was in some degree attributable to this World Summit.

22. Mr. TOURE (Mali) said that the document on the revised schedule of the World Summit for Children and related events (E/ICEF/1990/CRP.35), contained guidelines relating to statements and the four themes for consideration in the course of the debate.

23. Mr. DAHLGREN (Sweden) said that the success of the World Summit for Children would depend on progress achieved with regard to the rights of the child and what Governments were prepared to do for the survival, protection and development of children. He gave a brief summary of the draft Declaration and draft Plan of Action contained in document E/ICEF/1990/L.20.

GENERAL DEBATE

24. Mr. PIRIZ BALLON (Uruguay) said that his delegation wished to emphasize that many of the problems afflicting children were no more than the reflection and result of the difficult situation suffered by the third world countries, which were subject to the heavy burden of external debt and the deterioration of the terms of trade of their commodities. In that context, children and women, the most vulnerable groups in the society, were usually the main victims. He hoped that the détente that today characterized international relations would promote greater co-operation and solidarity on the international scale, leading to the adoption of effective disarmament measures that would liberate resources for improving the situation of children. He believed that the Plan of Action to be approved by the Summit should be put into practice as soon as possible. His delegation was concerned about the situation of children in especially difficult circumstances, including those that were victims of apartheid, foreign occupation and armed conflict. Such situations inflicted unspeakable suffering on all human beings and were particularly odious when they affected children. Similarly, it was necessary to alleviate poverty and reactivate economic growth, objectives which could not be achieved as long as a realistic solution was not found to the problem of external debt and, at the same time, measures adopted to promote the creation of a more just and equitable system of trade.

(Mr. Piriz Ballon, Uruguay)

25. Lastly, his delegation expressed its satisfaction at the entry into force of the Convention on the Rights of the Child and hoped that, through the full implementation of its provisions, a better future would be forged for mankind.

26. Miss DIEGUEZ (Mexico) said that the draft World Declaration on the Survival, Protection and Development of Children and the draft Plan of Action for the implementation of the Declaration were the result of broad consultations between various Governments, organizations and specialized agencies of the United Nations system and with various non-governmental organizations, in accordance with the recommendations made by the Executive Board in December 1989. Both texts dealt with the central problems affecting children and constituted a grave obstacle to their well-being and development.

27. The general principle governing the draft Declaration was the commitment of Heads of State and Government to give high priority to the rights of children and to act together at the national and the international level to protect those rights and improve the lives of children. Such a commitment would contribute to large-scale world mobilization for children, with the participation not only of Governments but of society as a whole and international organizations.

28. The Convention on the Rights of the Child was entering into force at a time when the Heads of State and Government of many countries were meeting precisely to examine formulas that would make it possible to guarantee the rights laid down in the Convention. The draft Declaration and the draft Plan of Action also considered the important role of women, as mothers and principal agents of development, and the role of the family, as the unit principally responsible for the care and protection of children. Her delegation considered that those drafts covered satisfactorily the main aspects of the problems of children in the current world and hoped that the Executive Board would share its views.

29. Mrs. MBELLA NGOMBA (Cameroon) emphasized the importance of the World Declaration and the Plan of Action, which complemented the Convention on the Rights of the Child and which examined the broad outlines of world aspirations regarding the protection and survival of children in the 1990s.

30. Cameroon was particularly interested in chapter J of the draft Plan of Action on alleviation of poverty and revitalization of economic growth, and she hoped that in the debates of the World Summit the guidelines set forth in the declaration would be clarified, particularly with regard to complementary measures.

31. With regard to the cost of the World Summit, the country response had exceeded original estimates, which should therefore be revised. It was regrettable that the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions had not been able to give its consultative opinion on the proposal relating to the revised estimate. The proposal was modest and reasonable and could be financed from the resources pledged and those currently being considered in various capitals throughout the world. The Executive Director should be empowered to spend up to the amounts indicated in the revised budget, and she took note, in particular, of the

(Mrs. Mbella Ngomba, Cameroon)

explanations of the Deputy Executive Director for Operations, who had been in constant contact with the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions and had stated that the pledges for the World Summit would continue until 1991. Consequently, the funds expended could be recuperated.

32. Mr. CHOWDHURY (Bangladesh) welcomed the remarks of the Chairman of the Executive Board and of the Executive Director of UNICEF, who was carrying out a mission of peace at a time of crisis. He said that the World Summit might be the largest gathering of its kind since the Congress of Vienna in the previous century. Unlike that meeting, the objective of which had been to advance the interests of kings, the World Summit had a nobler objective, the interests of children, which demonstrated that the values of mankind had evolved.

33. The Declaration and the Plan of Action were the product of relentless efforts spanning several months. The adoption of the two documents would benefit children everywhere, both in the developed and in the developing worlds, and even in the least developed countries, such as Bangladesh. Therefore, he proposed that the Executive Board should approve them.

34. Mr. YU Mengjia (China) said it was a known fact that one sixth of the world's cildren lived in China. The Government and the people of China had always attached great importance to the welfare of children. Although the task was an arduous one, China had made major progress in that direction. When the six Governments had proposed the World Summit for Children, the Government of China had responded rapidly to the initiative and had lent it its support. China's national leaders, President Yang Shangkun and Prime Minister Li Peng hoped fervently that the Summit would be a success. Unfortunately, official commitments would prevent them from attending in person, but Prime Minister Li Peng had appointed the Minister for Foreign Affairs Qian Qichen as Special Representative and head of a high-ranking delegation, consisting of four officials, to the World Summit. President Yang and Prime Minister Li would send a joint message of congratulations to the World Summit.

35. His delegation considered that the question of the survival, protection and development of children was a problem affecting the whole of mankind, and a task which devolved on Governments throughout the world. Although certain Heads of State or Government might be unable to take part in the World Summit for one reason or another, they could still contribute to the success of the meeting. He hoped that the Planning Committee for the World Summit and the Secretariat would take the special circumstances into account and would make appropriate arrangements to facilitate such contributions.

36. MR. BRAUTIGAM (Federal Republic of Germany) said that the progress report and the information meeting held the previous day by UNICEF had demonstrated that excellent work had been achieved. Moreover, he was pleased to announce that the President of the Federal Republic of Germany would attend the World Summit. Although his delegation had been late in joining in the preparations for the Summit and had not taken part in the drafting activities of the Working Group, it was highly appreciative of the results of that Group's deliberations. The draft

(Mr. Brautigam, Federal Republic of Germany)

Declaration on the World Summit was a very valuable document which clearly demonstrated the participants' moral and political commitment. He hoped that the Declaration and the World Summit itself would succeed fully in meeting the noble objectives it aspired to.

37. The profoundly disturbing events in the Middle East had demonstrated once again that the objectives of the draft Declaration could be achieved only if there was peace, stability and respect for human rights. He hoped that peace would be maintained, that the sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity of Kuwait would be restored by means of a political process under the authority of the United Nations, and that the meeting of so many eminent statesmen would contribute to that goal.

38. Mr. SITHIPRASASANA (Thailand) said that his delegation was immensely impressed with the great strides made in connection with the World Summit for Children, as presented in document E/ICEF/1990/16. In August 1990, two important events had taken place in Thailand. The first had been a regional seminar on the rights of the child, held in Bangkok, at which high-level government representatives from 12 countries had met and exchanged their ideas on the Convention on the Rights of the Child. The second had been the National Conference on the Thai Child with participation at the highest levels of government and 500 representatives of concerned departments, NGOs, mass media and academic, business and religious groups. Immediately after that conference, a draft document had been prepared on the basic minimum needs of and services for the Thai child, as well as a draft Declaration on the Rights of the Thai Child. Both drafts were to be proposed for approval by the Thai cabinet, and speedy implementation.

39. With regard to document E/ICEF/1990/L.20, his delegation generally endorsed both the spirit and the wording of the two drafts. The Government of Thailand would have no difficulty whatsoever in meeting the goals as enumerated in the appendix and relating to child survival, development and protection. For example, it should be mentioned that Thailand's present rate of achievement of goal (ii) of section E was 98 per cent, and would probably be even higher before the end of the century. Furthermore, the previous year a national sub-committee had been set up to give broad dissemination to the provisions of the Convention.

40. On the question of ratification of the Convention, Thailand was encountering certain difficulties with regard to some of its provisions. The matter was being actively considered by the various authorities concerned. In the mean time, and pending Thailand's accession to that important Convention, various working groups were exploring ways of putting its provisions into practice provisionally.

41. With regard to paragraph 12 of the draft Declaration, as the role of the father was increasingly accepted as essential for child growth and development, his delegation suggested that the Board should mention that function.

42. With respect to paragraph 15 of the draft Declaration, in many multiracial countries, national integration was a burning issue, and the Board might therefore

(Mr. Sithiprasasana, Thailand)

consider adding the phrase: "and be educated to become good citizens of their country of residence", at the end of the second sentence, i.e. after the words "... in a free society". Although the great majority of the people of Thailand were Buddhists, other religious beliefs and creeds had always been respected.

43. In closing, he would recall the words of General Choonhavan, the Prime Minister of Thailand, who had said that children were the bright morrow, hope and promise.

44. Mrs. SPRINGER (Barbados) said that the draft Declaration and Plan of Action were clear indicators of UNICEF's ability to address the myriad problems affecting the survival of children. Those documents had succinctly, yet holistically, embraced the rights and privileges of children. She also pointed out the importance of the entry into force of the Convention on the Rights of the Child. It was now their responsibility to ensure that that instrument was not just another piece of legal paper. Governments, NGOs, teachers and parents must all unite their collective wills to implement together the principles enshrined in it. Similarly, it was essential to demonstrate during the World Summit a commitment to UNICEF's unremitting efforts for the benefit of children everywhere in the world.

45. Mr. MUMBENGEGWI (Zimbabwe) praised those Governments which had taken the initiative of organizing the World Summit, an initiative which in a short time had gathered such momentum that it had turned into a historic event for humanity. The Heads of State would meet not to discuss their own rights but to study the rights of those who thus far had had no voice: children.

46. It was appropriate to emphasize the arduous consultations which had had to go into the preparation of a meeting on such a scale, as well as the need to increase the allocations in the revised budget. After such a painstaking and conscientious preparation, the World Summit would be a landmark for generations to come.

47. Mr. KOIKE (Japan) said that his Government was highly satisfied with the progress achieved, although there was still much to do. For example, 40,000 children died every day for lack of adequate care, and that situation could and should be remedied by joint efforts on the part of nations. The World Summit should be the culmination of the activities thus far undertaken by UNICEF, and at the same time the first step of a major impetus towards the future, taken with renewed and firm political will.

48. The Government of Japan endorsed the draft Declaration and Plan of Action as presented, although it would wish to suggest some amendments of secondary importance. Furthermore, his delegation recognized that it was necessary to undertake a detailed revision of the budget, with the objective of increasing it, given the fact that the World Summit would be attended by a far greater number of participants than had been anticipated.

The meeting rose at 1 p.m.